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# HARPSICHORD

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Requests for membership or additional information may be sent to International Harpsichord Society, P. O. Box 4323, Denver, Colorado 80204.

# GO FOR BAROQUE

by Hal Haney



Our cover art for this issue is actually part of the "Harpsichord of Note" feature which starts on pages 10 and 11. It illustrates the cast rose used by Kirkman during the latter part of his career. It contains the initials "I. K." and presents King David playing his harp surrounded by stringed and wind instruments. Earlier roses did not contain the instruments and the earliest were made of the initials "J. K." in an intertwined knot pattern. All roses were of gilt metal.

The response to the interview with harpsichord builder John Challis of New York was so encouraging that we decided we should interview and photograph other builders. I have just returned from a 4,000-plus mile trip that has taken me from sea to shining sea. The result is a collection of more than 200 photographs and around 64,000 words of interview covering about 400 typewritten pages. Of course all this must be edited down to a manageable size without eliminating important comments by the builders. We're working on that now and in the near future you will be reading interviews with Jon Berg of Los Angeles, Calif.; William Dowd of Cambridge, Mass.; Frank Hubbard of Waltham, Mass.; Jay Witcher and Henry Hunnel of the Mojave desert ghost town of Randsburg Calif.; Richard Jones of Jones-Clayton, Los Angeles, Calif. and Joseph Norris of Philadelphia, Pa. These are just the interviews we have already completed. Others are in the planning stage and will be announced at a later date.

For the past year or two we have been in contact with Dr. Wolfgang Fahrenbach, a talented engineer who has invented and perfected a harpsichord tuning aid called the Fahrenbach Micro-tuner. Because of his desire to help all harpsichordists and builders, he has turned the patent rights over to the Society. We will offer Fahrenbach Micro-tuners for sale at the most reasonable price possible with any profits to be retained by the Society. Details and photographs will appear in our next issue. The device is beautifully simple, easy to install and foolproof. After the first tuning is done, it is almost never necessary to use a tuning hammer or wrench again. Keeping the instrument at correct pitch is as easy as turning a radio dial. The Fahrenbach Micro-tuner can be built in the average shop, or it can be purchased from the Society all ready for installation. We're very enthusiastic about it here and believe it will help solve some tuning problems which have been bugging our members for years.

While we're on the subject of tuning we've discovered another tuning system which is unique to say the least. It was devised by Don Galt, Technical Editor of the Piano Technician's Journal after conferring with a student of Isolde Ahlgrimm. (Vol 1 No. 4) The system permits you to tune Mean Tone using a metronome. Complete charts and instructions will appear in the next issue.

But for now, we hope you enjoy the current issue. We're especially proud of both our new and loyal advertisers on the back page.

Hal Haney

## MOVING?

A change of address card must be on file at The Harpsichord office in order to receive missed issues, due to address change, without cost. Our address has changed too. Be sure to send all communications to International Harpsichord Society, P. O. Box 4323, Denver, Colorado 80204.



# SYMPATHETIC VIBRATIONS

## The Metal Frame — Yes or No?

by Wallace Zuckermann

Recently I visited the offices of the New York Pro Musica where I found two harpsichords, both single manual 2 x 8'. One was an Italian copy by Martin Seidel of Mexico, the other an instrument by Rutkowski and Robinette. Both had been tuned about two months previous to my visit.



The Italian copy, with case walls 3/16" thick and a deep crack in the soundboard, was in reasonably good tune; the Rutkowski, with a case aluminum frame, laminated soundboard and tuning pins set into a metal plank, was completely out. This little confrontation does not, of course, disprove the efficiency of the metal frame, nor does it argue against Rutkowski and Robinette, who are among our best makers. It does, however, lead to two conclusions which should be kept in mind in a discussion of the modern harpsichord: (1) a metal frame, alone and of itself, is no guarantee of tuning stability, since the stability can be lost before the frame ever has a chance to act; and (2) a maker has to exercise great care when dealing with modern (and possibly untried) materials.

The trouble with the Rutkowski turned out to be loose tuning pins. The pins, set into phenolic bushings in the aluminum plank, were so loose that the mere act of placing a tuning key upon them made them unwind. A slight tapping of the pin was able to tighten them firmly but since these pins were probably tapered, they may well

work themselves up and out after a time. A plastic bushing, as is also provided by the Baldwin harpsichord, can be a dangerous thing unless it makes a perfect fit to both the pin itself and the hole in the plank, and has the right amount of resiliency to keep the pin tight. (I have, incidentally, not encountered this problem on other Rutkowski or Challis instruments which are made in a similar way.

There are any number of ways a maker can spoil his tuning and adjustment stability in spite of a metal frame. There is strong-angled double pinning at bridge or nut, which causes "frictional retardation" and allows the string to pull through the angle only gradually, long after the tuner has put down his wrench; there are loose tuning pins or bushings as mentioned above; there are any number of faulty jack designs which can cause trouble regardless of the metal frame; and there the necessarily thin soundboard and thin strings which must be present in a harpsichord if any kind of tone is to be achieved, and which are not prevented from shifting around by a "Panzerplatte" — literally an armored plate, as Maendler used to call it.

The instruments of Maendler, Pleyel, Baldwin and Sabathil, all of which have metal frames or plates (there is a distinction between a cast frame and a welded or bolted frame which need not concern us here) prove that the metal itself is no guarantee of anything except a heavy harpsichord. The logical conclusion to be drawn from this (and Challis is the only maker who has had the courage to face this) is to make practically the entire harpsichord of metal. Otherwise, why not just make a simple, light, resonant wooden case, which needs a half hour tuning job once a month?

P.S. My brief discussions of such subjects as plectra, plywood, bridges and framing are not meant to be the final word of authority. What I have in mind within the scope of this column is to stimulate discussion of these controversial and by no means settled subjects. The reader who feels

strongly about any of these points should take pen in hand, so that we can establish a useful dialogue.

Wallace Zuckermann

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*The International Society of Harpsichord Builders is proud to give special recognition to the following Contributing Members whose interest and generosity aid materially in the development and preservation of the instruments and music of the baroque period and assists in furthering the various projects and programs of the Society.*

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# Start With A Repertoire of One

by Dr. George Sargent



There is an essential aspect in which the life of one who has just bought or built a harpsichord differs from that of one who has just bought or built, say, a hi-fi set. The hi-fi man listens with great pride to all the compliments about the neatness of his construction, the imaginative way his equipment is installed, etc. And when his friends ask him to demonstrate the sound of his work, he has but to put on a record and point out the wide frequency response, the effortless volume, and the effects of the various controls.

The harpsichord owner, too, likes to hear compliments about the wood finish, how well the instrument graces the music room, and what a lovely shape the harpsichord has. But there are some owners who, while enjoying the compliments, are also secretly dreading the next moment when someone is bound to ask, "Won't you play us something?" — not just a one-finger scale, but a real composition from beginning to end with no mistakes or hesitations.

For those of you who suddenly panic at this moment; who get a case of chills, nerves, and shaking hands;

whose minds go blank as to which hand is right and left, and which key is middle C; who feel as if your friends have become critics who will flinch at every slip of the finger (inevitably, there will be one or two checking up on you by watching the music over your shoulder) and perhaps never speak to you again if you get lost and have to start over again — for you (I should say *us*, for I am one of you) I have written down a few suggestions on how to prepare for public performance.

In private, it is great fun to rattle through miles of half-learned pieces and to sight-read page after page of unfamiliar music, but your audience doesn't care about the personal pleasure you get from exploring the harpsichord literature. They want to hear a finished performance, preferably one that shows off the potentials of your instrument. In private, you can experiment with different registrations, tempi, fingerings, and phrasings, but your audience doesn't care about this. They want to hear your final decisions, confidently presented. In private, you can make as many mistakes as you want, even to the extent of faking entire passages, using your imagination to supply the right notes. But your audience is looking forward to hearing a professional-caliber performance, with every note in place.

This means that part of your daily practice hour should be devoted to maintaining a repertory, even if it is only one or two pieces. Then this repertory will always be at the ready for public performance. You may eventually become completely bored with these pieces, but when the moment comes when you are asked to play, you will be prepared and will not have to sit there wondering which of your half-learned compositions might possibly go best in the emergency, hoping that somehow you'll get through it alive.

The biggest cause of nervousness in public performance is the fear of making a mistake, and yet accuracy is the aspect of performance that is most often left to chance. Your best friend in working for greater accuracy is the metronome.

There are all too many amateur musicians who look upon the use of a metronome as so much nonsense, saying that it makes one's playing rigid and mechanical. These people evidently miss the point that music is basically a rigid and mechanical discipline — indeed, during the Middle Ages music was a branch of mathematics. A sequence of right notes related correctly in time is the basis of any performance, and must be mastered before any expressive nuances can be considered. The nuances are subtle changes you make from the mechanical rendition of the notes, and before you can make a change you've got to know what the original is all about. A slight lengthening here, a speeding-up there should be intentional, and not, as is the case with so many amateur performances, accidental.

Constant use of the metronome has numerous advantages. For one thing, it helps you duplicate in private one cause of nervousness connected with public performance: it will not allow you to hesitate or falter if you make a mistake or even get lost. You will be forced to recover and keep going without dropping a beat. Of course, your goal is not to have any musical accidents at all, but they will sometimes occur and you must be prepared to carry on as if nothing happened.

Another advantage, the most obvious one, is the ability of the metronome to indicate a steady speed. Your performance will gain considerable poise if you do not unintentionally speed up the easy parts and slow down for the technical difficulties.



But most important for the accuracy-minded player is the use of the metronome to help him produce perfect performances at various tempi. Eventually, you will decide that there is one tempo at which your piece sounds just right, but you will greatly improve your mastery if you frequently play it at other speeds. Slower performances will reinforce your habit of playing only right notes, and faster performances (still with only right notes) will enable you to discover and solve technical difficulties, and make your performance at normal speed that much more relaxed and easy.

For example, suppose you have decided that your piece goes best at M. 112; here is what you might do during your practice sessions. Try to play through at M. 80 without a single mistake, and without stopping if you should slip. If there was an accident, remedial action is required. Take the offending passage, and with the metronome still at M. 80, play the passage five times *in a row* without error, remembering that any mistake in any of the five repetitions sends you right back to trial number one. If there was more than one accident when you played the entire piece, each one must be dealt with in the same way.

This may seem tedious at first, but in a few days you will be amazed at how the habit of playing only correct notes is reinforced. Every mistake you make weakens this habit, hence the extreme measures you must go to with corrective action.

Now play the entire piece again at M. 80, without stopping for anything. Imperfect? Return to your remedial action, and return to performance number one. Perfect? Try for a third. If the third performance goes well, congratulate yourself, reset the metronome to M. 88, and start in again trying to achieve three successive, perfect performances at that speed. Then, three times at M. 96, M. 104, and finally M. 112, full speed.

This exercise is the best preparation you can make for public perform-

ance. You will feel some tension during the first of the three playings. If that goes well, nervousness will set in during the second playing because you know that any mistake will send you back to doing the first performance all over again. Then during the third playing you will feel about the same level of panic that a live performance would create; you cannot possibly slip without severe penalties.

There are other difficulties you can put in your path to improve your M. 112 performance. Try for three perfect playings at M. 120 and even at M. 132. The danger here is that you might start to prefer these faster tempi because you are bored with your piece, but resist this temptation. Your only reason to get three perfect performances at M. 132 is to make M. 112 seem like child's-play. There is a natural tendency for performers to play their repertory somewhat faster than normal before an audience, thus inviting disaster. In public, imagine that you are playing a bit slower than normal, and considering the excitement of the moment, you will probably be playing at the correct speed.

Another difficulty you can create in order to make a normal performance seem easier is to play a difficult passage in different rhythms and articulations. This is especially helpful in gaining control over a rapid succession of even notes, like a run or an arpeggio. The more control you have over such a passage, the more brilliant it will sound, even to the extent of sounding faster than a rapid but sloppily-executed performance. Such a passage is shown in Example 1, taken from J. S. Bach's *Prelude and Fugue in A Minor* (BWV 897), measures 20 and 21 in the prelude. This

(See Example 1, Page 6)

is one of those passages that are basically very easy to play, and yet require considerable work to get the ultimate in brilliance and evenness at full speed. It must hit the audience as a cascade of rapid, perfectly-controlled attacks, and not as a mad jumble.

There are two problems to be

solved. First, there is the constant transfer of patterns from one hand to the other (RH, stems up; LH stems down), which can easily lead to stumbling as one hand takes over before the other has quite finished. Secondly, there is only one possible fingering (the one I have indicated) that will keep hand motion to a minimum, a fingering that involves the weakest finger: the fourth.

Example 2 shows some different rhythms you might use in practicing this passage to train the fingers to strike at the time you intend, and Example 3 shows different articulations that can be used to strengthen all the

(See Example 2, Page 6)

(See Example 3, Page 6)

fingers. Normally, you would play this evenly and legato; the introduction of the rhythms and staccato notes requires considerably more effort and muscle. Of course, you will use the metronome at various speeds, and get five consecutive, perfect performances at any one speed and in any one rhythm or articulation.

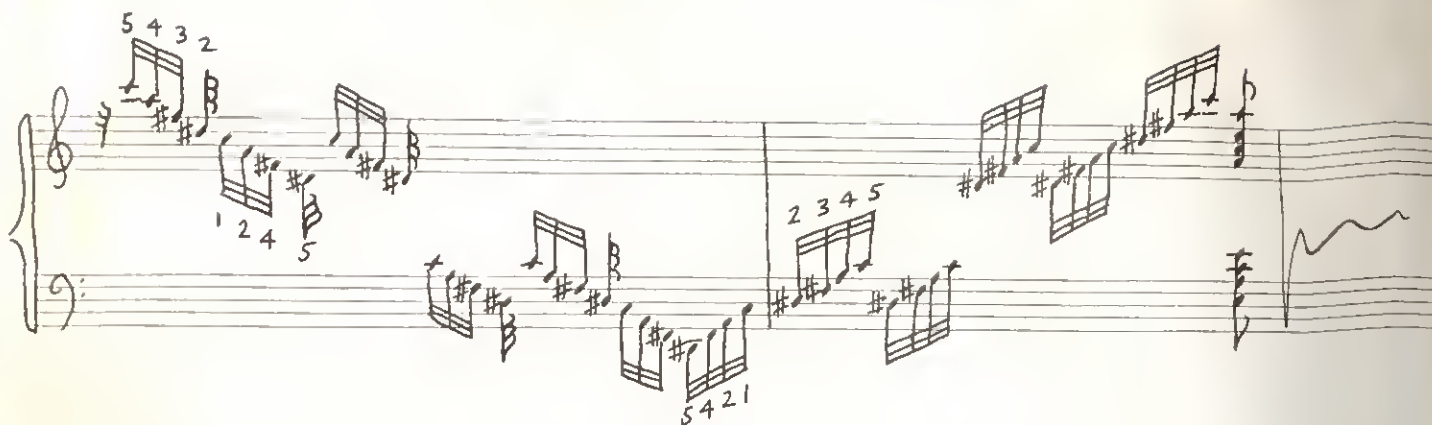
Incidentally, the second-inversion A-minor chord at the end of the arpeggio presents problems of its own. Musically, playing it just as a chord after that brilliant passage is distinctly an anti-climax. Technically, it is almost impossible to get the right hand into position for its part of the chord in time. Harmonically, the audience must be made aware of the E in the bass, for this chord starts the highly-ornamented final cadence of the prelude, and the E must be related to another E two measures later if the cadence is to make sense. Example 4 shows two possible alternate ways to play the chord. The first way

(See Example 4, Page 6)

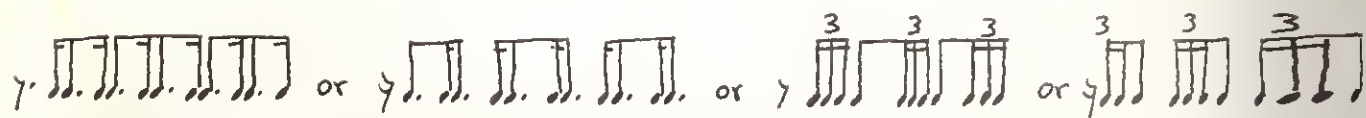
carries on the forward energy of the thirty-second notes, and emphasizes the E. The second way leaves absolutely no doubt about the E, and although it seriously departs from Bach's notation of the chord (and indeed sounds rather more like Liszt than Bach), it successfully resolves the lowest D sharp in the arpeggio, and announces to the audience that a

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(Example 1)



(Example 2)



(Example 3)



(Example 4)



major point has been reached.

Once you have drilled for accuracy and conquered the technical obstacles, you will be able to approach a public performance of your piece with far more confidence than if you had left things to chance. But this does not mean you can just sit back and enjoy your own playing when the big moment comes. Let's face it: the enjoyment is in the preparation of the piece and in the hearing of compliments after you have played — the performance itself is hell. Here are four suggestions of what to think about during your public appearance.

(1) Stick to your decisions. During your extensive practice, you determined certain policies regarding tempo, fingering, stop changes, phrasing, articulation, etc., and any deviation from these during performance could easily upset the sequence of habits you have established.

(2) Be prepared for the fact that the biggest attack of nerves comes toward the bottom of the first page, and not at the start. At that point you realize you have started a highly successful performance, and you feel the challenge to maintain the level you have established. You can either give in to this attack of nerves and lose the whole thing up, or sublimate this new-found energy to help you produce the best performance you have ever given.

(3) Totally ignore your audience. This is easy to do in a concert hall because of the lighting and the physical separation, but in your music

room there will inevitably be a couple that will start a conversation, or an individual who will lean over the soundboard to see some evidence of the jack action, or those who carefully watch the music you are reading, or even intellectually curious people who start asking you questions.

(4) Never drop your guard during an easy passage or especially during the last eight measures; these are the two places where accidents are most likely to happen. The temptation is strong to relax during the easy parts, but remember that these have received far less attention during practice than have the hard parts. And toward the end, avoid the common tendency to start congratulating yourself on a fine performance before it is actually over.

I don't mean by all I have said to suggest that playing the harpsichord is nothing but a miserable and demanding experience. Miserable during public performances, yes. Demanding during that part of your practice hour in which you prepare your repertory, yes. But certainly most of your practice time should be spent playing what you enjoy playing, and you will receive rich personal rewards from what you do. The fact remains that you have many friends who have not yet discovered these joys of accomplishment for themselves, and for these unfortunate souls, whose only experience with music is passive listening rather than active participation, a source of inspiration just might be the confident, effective performance you give them.

Dr. George Sargent

## MORE CONTEMPORARY MUSIC FOR THE HARPSICHORD

By George K. Huber, Librarian, Special Collections, Swarthmore College.

The following compositions are to be added to the bibliographies of contemporary harpsichord solo music which have appeared in previous issues of *The Harpsichord*. They are taken from *Literatur für alte Tasteninstrumente*, ed. by Hugo Alker, 1967; *Sonorum Speculum*, mirror of Dutch musical life (house organ of Donemus) and a 60-year jubilee music catalogue (1895-1955) of the firm N. J. Verkruijsen, Amsterdam.

- Andriessen, J. *Pavane e Passamezzo*. Donemus.  
 Angerer, P., *Toccaten für Cembalo*. Doblinger.  
 Apostel, H. A., *Alpacher Miniaturen*. Universal Edition.  
 Baldings, Henk. *Arcadia*.  
 Baur, J., *Divertimento, 3 Fantasien für Cembalo und Schlagzeug*. Breitkopf und Hartel 6421.  
 —, *Suite für Cembalo*, 1956. Breitkopf 6305.  
 Benary, P., *6 Miniaturen*. Mannheimer Musikverlag.  
 Borris, S., *Partita für Cembalo*, op. 67 No. 1. Sirius.  
 —, *9 Variationen über ein eigenes Thema für Cembalo*, op. 46, no. 3. Sirius.  
 Bush, *Suite für Cembalo oder Klavier*. Peters 4771.  
 Bussotti, S., *Pour clavier (après "Pièces de chair II")*. Moeck 5015.  
 Casella, A., *Sonata*. Edition Ricordi.  
 Damase, J. M., *Passacaille*. Leduc.  
 Dandelot, G., *Suite*. Schott.  
 Dijk, Jan van., *Capriccio*. Donemus.  
 Flothuis, Marius, *Suite voor Clavecimbel* op. 48 no. 1. Donemus.  
 Francaix, J., *L'Insectarium*. Schott 4977.  
 Gerner, H. G., op. 34 *Cembalokonzert für 2 Cembali zu 4 Händen*. Peters 4975.  
 Grunenwald, Jean Jacques, *Suite of dances*. Salabert, Paris.  
 Hamerik, E., *Venezianische Suite*. Hansen.  
 Huber, K., *Chace für Cembalo solo*. Schott 5429.  
 Jacobi, W., *Sonatine*. Kahnt.  
 Ikonow, B., *Pieces breves pour clavecimbel*. L'Oiseau Lyre.  
 Kelterborn, R., *Esquisses für Cembalo und Schlagzeug*. Breitkopf 6422.  
 Klein, R. R., *Chaconne über "Es sungen drei Engel..."*. Noetzel 3031.  
 —, *Spielbuch für ein Tasteninstrument*. Noetzel 3074.  
 Knab, A., *Suite in G major für Klavier oder Cembalo*. Bärenreiter BA 1147.  
 Kox, Hans, *Sonatine voor Clavecimbel*, 1953. Donemus.  
 (continued on page 19)

## Society Membership Now Open

Harpsichord, clavichord and baroque music enthusiasts are invited to join the International Harpsichord Society which includes a years subscription to the journal *THE HARPSICHORD*. Subscribing Membership dues are \$8 per annum, (\$9 in Canada). Other membership fees are noted under MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION on page 2. Send check or money order to International Harpsichord Society, P. O. Box 4323, Denver, Colorado 80204, U.S.A. Gift memberships receive a special letter of welcome.



# BOOKS

*HARPSICHORDS AND CLAVICHORDS* by Cynthia A. Hoover. Smithsonian Institution Press, City of Washington, District of Columbia, 1969. 7 x 7½ in., 43 pages, 38 photographs and drawings. Paper 40c.

I am generally opposed to governmental agencies entering a project that could be handled just as well, if not better, by private enterprise. This includes the field of publishing. However, when a governmental agency does a superior job at a reasonable cost, I will be the first to stand up and shout the good news . . . and "*Harpsichords and Clavichords*" by Smithsonian Institution Press is certainly good news.

Cynthia A. Hoover, Associate Curator, Division of Musical Instruments, Smithsonian Institution, has done a superb job in compiling a selection of instruments owned by our S. I. and arranging their photographs in a clear, concise and scholarly little

volume that is an excellent addition to any library. It is interesting to note that the book was designed principally to be used by patrons visiting the harpsichord collection in Washington D. C. and for this it is also excellent. Of course, as is often true with many museums, not all the instruments illustrated are on view at one time since the exhibits rotate. The builders represented are used more to show general types of instruments rather than specific instruments on display.

The full-color cover illustrates a closeup of a virginal by Giovanni Battista Boni, 1617. Page four introduces the reader to harpsichords in general with an explanation of how they work. The next seven pages describe Flemish harpsichords including illustrations of instruments by Ruckers and Dulcken. The short octave is explained and clearly illustrated with drawings. Italian instruments are covered in twelve pages featuring instruments by DeQuoco and Boni. The complex split-key manuals are illustrated and covered in the accompanying text. The next six pages

are devoted to English instruments including the builders Hitchcock and Shudi. The instruments of Benoist Stehlin, 1760, are used in the section on French harpsichord. The publication concludes with a six page section on clavichords which includes some excellent close-up photographs of fretted and unfretted clavichord actions. A selected bibliography terminates the work.

The 43 pages contain 38 photographs, many full page size. While the page size is relatively small (7" x 7½") many of the pictures are close-ups which do not suffer at all from the necessary reduction.

We are very grateful that Mrs. Hoover has permitted us to publicize this volume for sale by mail since it is undoubtedly the best buy in harpsichord-clavichord material we have seen in a long time. Knowing how museum publications have a tendency to go out of print rather rapidly I wouldn't delay a minute in ordering this beautiful gem.

I believe we can be proud that our national museum has had the foresight to acquire these valuable in-

(continued on page 9)



Virginal by Giovanni Battista Boni, 1617. This photo, in full color, graces the cover of *Harpsichords and Clavichords*.



## THE SUBJECT IS ROSES

by David H. Cavanaugh

In answer to "The Harpsichord" magazine's request for information on original roses, I would like to tell you about the rose I recently made for my Zuckermann harpsichord.

The rose was made by laminating a sheet of burley elm veneer to a quarter inch piece of poplar. The design was then cut out with a Dremel electric tool. A half dozen coats of spar varnish were applied with intermittent fine sanding and polishing. The

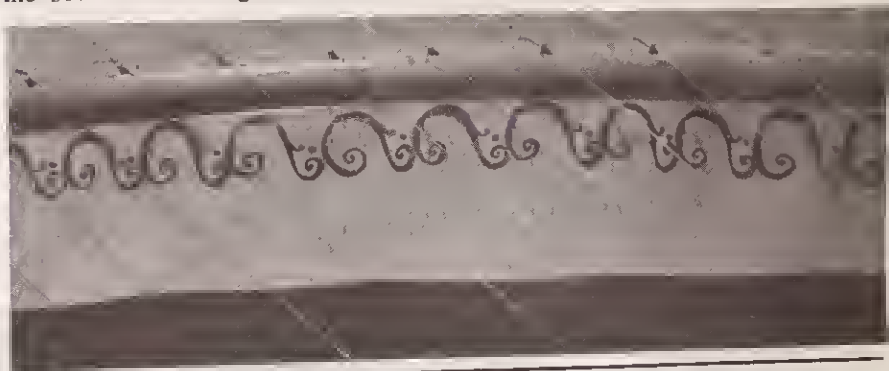
rose was then fit into the soundboard, flush.

The design was an attempt to reconcile the baroque tradition of the harpsichord with its Danish modern case. Incidentally, an excellent source of inspiration for this type of design is architectural detail, particularly that of eighteenth century plaster and woodwork on ceilings and around fireplaces, wrought iron entrance gates, balconies and stairways.

While I was working on the rose, my wife added an enamelled scroll to the soundboard along the bridge, us-

ing Testor's model enamel and three fine sable brushes. This is a safe procedure, provided that the soundboard has had several good coats of varnish. Any slips of the brush were easily removed with a "Q-Tip" dipped in turpentine. This did not affect the finish on the soundboard at all, as long as the excess turpentine was wiped away immediately. We thought this might be of interest to those readers who are handy with a paintbrush and true baroque enthusiasts as well.

David H. Cavanaugh



### BOOKS (continued from page 8)

struments and doubly proud that Cynthia Hoover has been permitted to do a job that is outstanding in its presentation of this information to the public.

*Note: The \$.40 cost includes mailing fees in continental USA when copies are ordered from the Government Printing Office. These orders take at least a month to process. Copies can also be obtained from the Museum Book Shops, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. 20560. Since the shops are privately run, they must charge postage (\$.12), but the manager of the Book Shops told us that they can, and will, fill orders from Society members more promptly than GPO.*

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Cynthia Adams Hoover was born in Lexington, Nebraska, an agricultural town situated on the South Platte River which was once an important stop on the famous Oregon Trail. She received her B.A. from Wellesley College, an M.A.T. from Radcliffe and an M.F.A. from Brandeis Univer-

sity. She taught music, history and English at Chadwick School, Calif.; music at Wellesley College and lectures regularly at Smithsonian Institution. She has received many scholastic awards, was recipient of a Weyman Fellowship (Harvard University) and her papers have been published in approximately a dozen journals.

Mrs. Hoover succeeded John Shortridge in 1961 as Associate Curator in the Division of Musical Instruments of Smithsonian Institution. When THE HARPSICHORD asked about her work, she replied; "During my first years here, I spent a great deal of time with the keyboard collection in an attempt to get it properly catalogued, photographed and restored. I visited many of the modern builders and relied very much upon the advice of William Dowd, Frank Hubbard and Hugh Gough in selecting the instruments to be restored.

"As our staff expanded (we are now seven) to include specialists in harpsichord restoration and harpsichord playing, I concentrated more on instruments made and used in

America. This has included everything from Franklin's glass Armonica to Spasm bands to electric guitars. It also includes research on two interesting 18th century harpsichords acquired by a leading family of Annapolis in the 18th century and still owned by them. Scott Odell, our chief restorer, and I are working on an article about these instruments. At the moment, though, I am working on a large exhibition on American music which is scheduled to open July 1. Since we've barely begun on it, I can see I'll be working long hours to get it finished."

Mrs. Hoover and her husband Roland, both play keyboard instruments and own a Shortridge Italian harpsichord (No. 3, 1964) and a fine Dolmetsch clavichord made about 1955. When she can find time from her regular position and her family (2 daughters, Sarah, 5 and Emily, 2½) she sings in the Camerata Chorus of Washington, a group of 18 singers who perform music dating from the 11th century to the 20th century.

The Harpsichord — 9

# HARPISICHORD *of* NOTE








**T**HIS sadly sway-backed instrument is what is left of a harpsichord built in 1776 by Jacob and Abraham Kirckman. We selected this particular builder's instrument to follow the article on Shudi which appeared in Volume III, no 1. Both Shudi and Kirckman worked for harpsichord builder Herman Tabel. While the students of Tabel ultimately became the most famous and successful English harpsichord builders who ever lived, Tabel was not as fortunate and perhaps not as talented. Only one harpsichord exists today which is

*The Harpsichord — 11*

Top view of instrument with lid and jack rail removed. See front cover of this journal for an enlarged photograph of the rose. 

signed by Tabel and even that is questionable.

Tabel died in 1738 and Kirckman married his widow that same year and took over the company. His marriage produced no heir so Jacob took his nephew, Abraham, into the business as a partner. Harpsichords from their shop carried both names from then on.

Kirckman died June 9 at Greenwich in 1792 and his nephew died just 2 years later at Hammersmith in 1794. Abraham's son Joseph, took charge of the company until it merged with Collards in 1896 and they were then taken over by Chappell and Company Ltd.

While both Shudi and Kirckman studied under the same master and built very similar instruments, twice as many Kirckman instruments have survived as instruments by Shudi. The most obvious reason for this is not the superiority of Kirckman's instruments, as much as the fact he built about twice as many . . . 2,000 to Shudi's 1155.

While Kirckman built three basic models; a single 2 x 8', a single 2 x 8', 1 x 4' and a double 2 x 8', 1 x 4', lute, this particular instrument is a single 2 x 8', 1 x 4'. It is in an inseparable case (as English instruments usually are) built of mahogany veneer with cross banding and holly stringing. The







View of underside with bottom removed. Notice the rather heavy and complex bracing. The jack slide rail is clearly visible. White lines on soundboard show attempts to repair extensive cracks.

lid has a moulding placed under the lip of it's edge which overlaps the sides of the case when the lid is closed. This gives a unified appearance and no gap can be seen between the bottom of the lid and the top of the case.

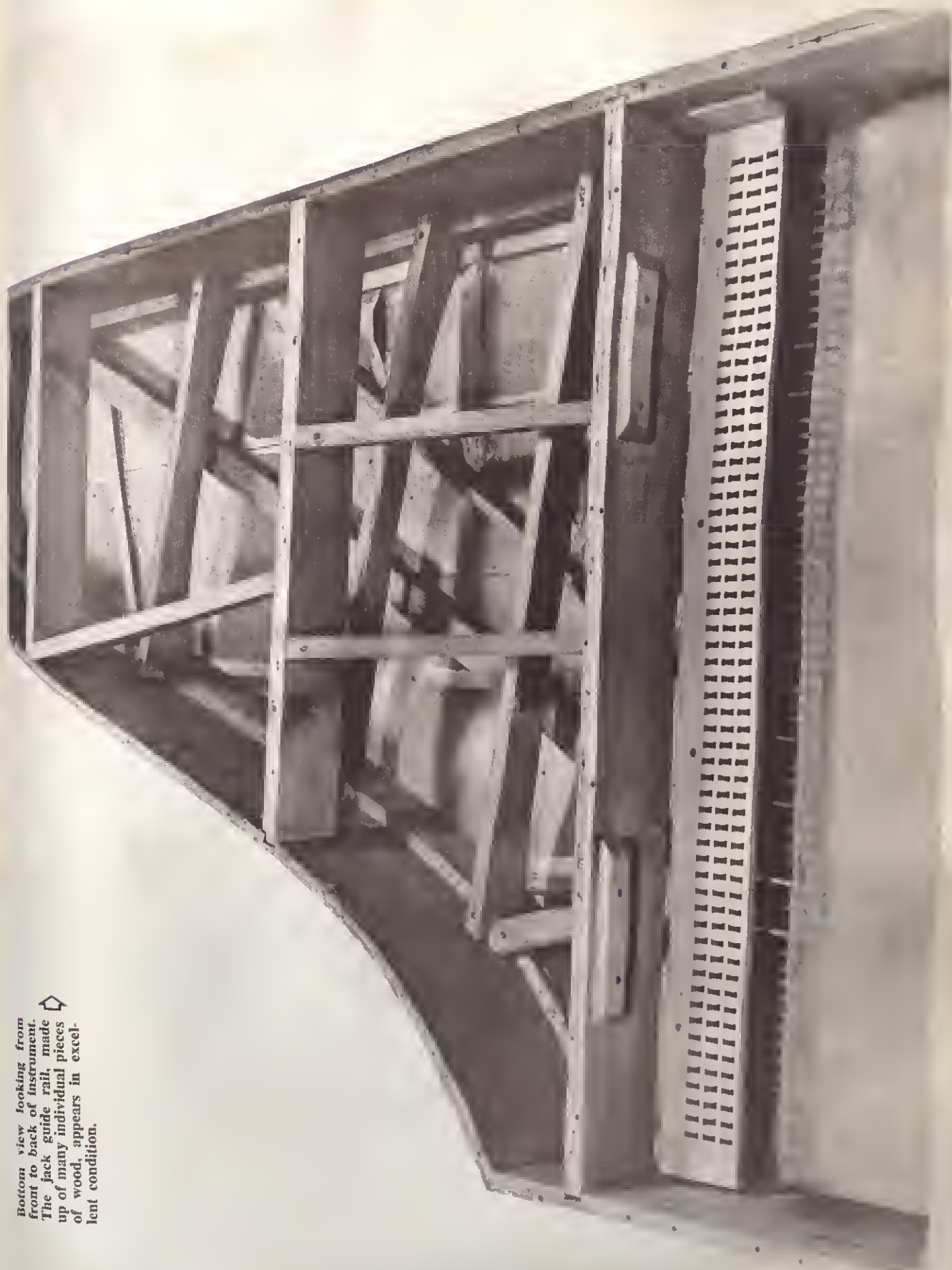
Even a strongly built instrument like a Kirkman can warp and twist from a combination of string tension, humidity, temperature changes etc. To see just how badly this instrument is warped, lay a straight edge (the side of an envelope or piece of paper will do) along the vertical line of the checkboard on the left side of the photograph on page 11. Move the straight edge to the right, lining up the edge with each new vertical you come to. As you approach the decorative stringing around the panels, you will have to twist your straight edge more and more to line up with the "verticals" of the case which by now are not vertical at all. The end of the case and the back legs are considerably out of plumb. The Smithsonian Institution, owner of this instrument, considers its condition "unrestorable to satisfactory condition." While we could have chosen a Kirkman harpsichord which is in much better shape than the one shown, we were able to purchase such excellent photographs of the interior detail that this factor outweighed the sad condition of the case.

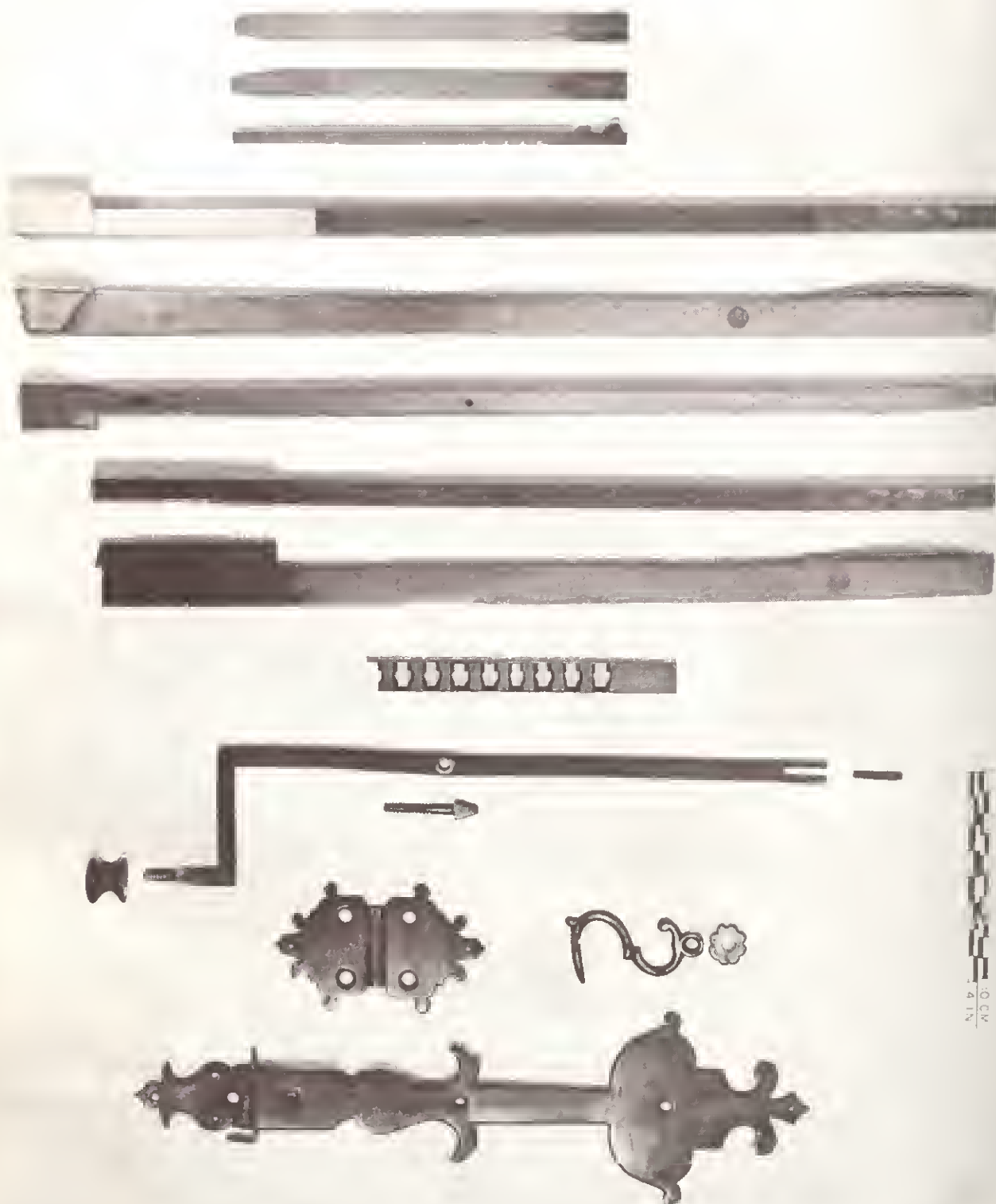
Bottom view looking from spine toward cheek board of instrument. Notice the very uncraftsman-like work on the two light braces. While these may have been added later, it is not uncommon to find very rough lumber in the interior of antique instruments.





Bottom view looking from  
front to back of instrument.  
The jack guide rail, made  
up of many individual pieces  
of wood, appears in excel-  
lent condition.





Detail of parts. Top to bottom. Jacks; front, back, side. Natural keys; top, side, bottom. Accidentals; top, side. Portion of jack slide. Brass stop knob. Brass hardware and hinges for the lid.



## DETAILED SPECIFICATIONS

**TYPE:** HARPSICHORD, one manual. **MAKER & DATE:** Jacobus and Abraham Kirckman, 1776, London.

Cat. No. 303,528 Acc. No. 62.559 How Acq. gift Date Rec'd 6/24/1918 Collector Hugo Worch

**MARKS:** Nameboard: Jacobus et Abraham Kirckman Londini Fecerunt 1776

**MATERIAL:** Case, mahogany veneer with cross banding and holly stringing, spruce soundboard, ivory naturals, ebony accidentals.

**BRIEF DESCRIPTION:** One manual harpsichord in inseparable case. Cover in 3 sections with eight brass hinges and 3 long hinges graduated in length along spine. Trestle stand. Rose of gilt metal with musical instruments and initials—IK.

Disposition 2 x 8', 1 x 4', 3 hand stops Compass FF — f<sup>3</sup>, no FF #

	Front 8'		Back 8'		4'	
	FF	68 3/16"	68"	—172.7cm	40	9/16"—103.0cm
Vibrating lengths:	C	64 7/16"—163.6cm	63 5/8"	—161.6cm	34	15/16"—88.7cm
	c	46 7/8"—119.0cm	45 5/8"	—115.9cm	23	9/16"—55.9cm
	c <sup>1</sup>	27 3/16"—69.1cm	26 3/16"	—66.5cm	13	1/4"—33.7cm
	c <sup>2</sup>	13 7/16"—34.2cm	12 7/8"	—32.7cm	6	9/16"—16.7cm
	c <sup>3</sup>	6 3/4"—17.2cm	6 1/2"	—16.5cm	3	3/16"—8.1cm
	f <sup>3</sup>	5 3/16"—13.2cm	4 15/16"	—12.6	2	3/8"—6.0cm

Plucking point:	Front 8'	
	7 3/6"	—18.3cm
	6 1/2"	—16.5cm
	5 1/8"	—13.0cm
	4 1/16"	—10.3cm
	3 1/16"	—7.8cm
	2 1/4"	—5.7cm
	1 15/16"	—4.9cm

To determine plucking point of back 8' add 17/32"—1/35cm;  
For 4' add 1 3/16"—3.05cm

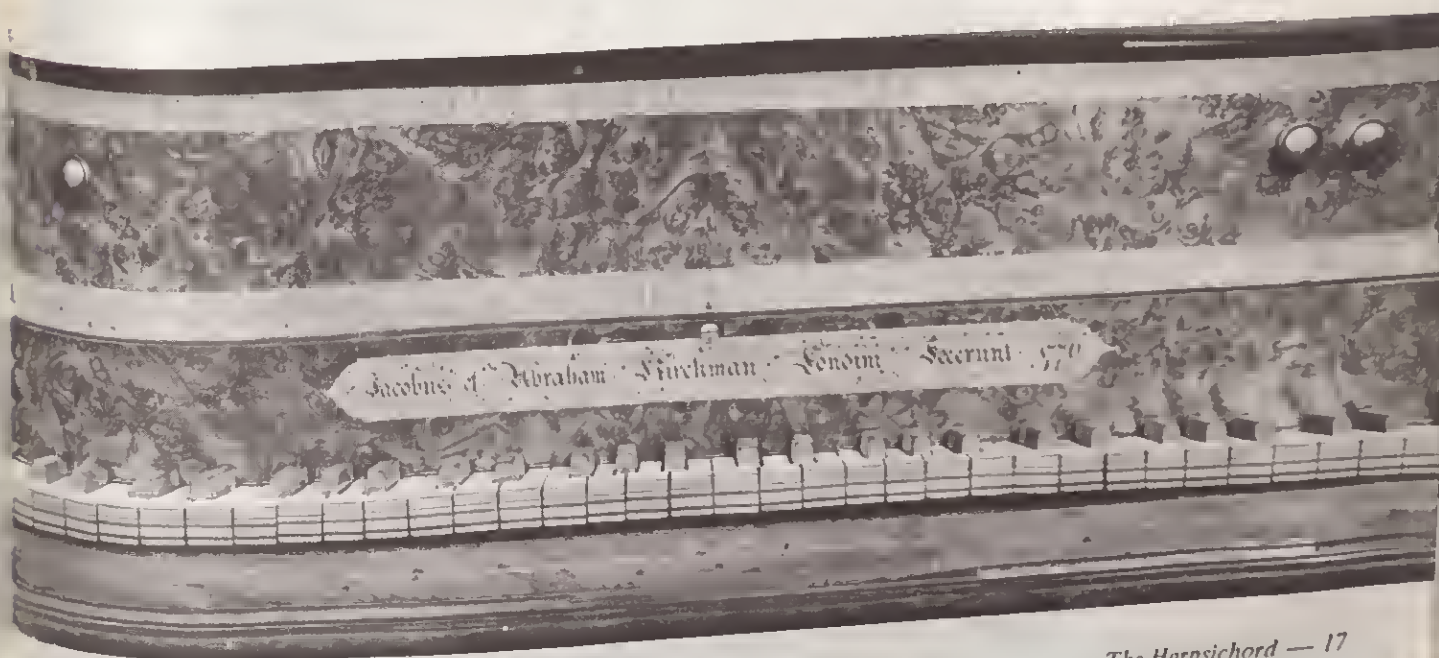
Maximum overall dimensions: 87 3/8" (196.5cm) x 36 13/16" (93.2cm) x 12 1/8" (30.7cm).

L	86 3/8" (219.3cm)	} minus moldings	3 octave span (48.7cm)	Diameter of rose: 3" (7.6cm)
W	36 3/8" (92.4cm)			
H	11 1/2" (29.2cm)			

Condition: poor, unplayable; frame warped; considered unrestorable to satisfactory condition.

Measurements by H.R.H. and Dorman Smith 8/16/1966

HELEN R. HOLLIS



## LETTERS

Dear Mr. Hancy:

I just read your very nice review of my book. Regarding the many errors which crept into the book and the lack of an index, I should explain how this developed. I had made arrangements to go to England in October 1969 and my publisher had told me that the book would be finished before I left. As it turned out, he was not able to finish it in time, and I never saw the final proofs. Many of the captions were written by someone else and account for the grievous errors such as those under the picture of the Neupert coupler. (I do know how a Neupert coupler works!) Since the book was to be ready in time for Christmas, the publisher had no more time for the index. All of those mistakes and oversights will be corrected in the second edition.

It now turns out that there are perhaps two ways of writing such a book. One is to take off a couple of years and visit every single maker everywhere, an undertaking of such magnitude that few would have the time or resources; the other, admittedly rather cumbersome, is to publish the book first and then wait for corrections. I can't blame the makers for not supplying much information; they get deluged with such requests and never know whether the writer is serious or will be accurate or favorable; for that reason many withhold information. Once the book comes out, everyone is up in arms, but at least many will then take the trouble to supply details. Thus it happened that in addition to a number of errors, some of my judgments may have been too harsh (for instance about Sabathil, Michael Thomas, and Scholz.) I have since seen or corresponded with these and other makers and will be able to revise their sections.

I visited the Frankfurt fair this year and the reaction in Germany to this book, which was being sold there was, to say the least, spectacular (in a negative sense). They could not get

used to the fact that a "scientific" book could be so light in style, and their English was not sufficient to appreciate some of the subtleties (perhaps a good thing!). I am sorry if I have offended Neupert owners with my statement of tuning. I did say that Neuperts were better than other production instruments and I would much sooner work on a Neupert than many others. It is true that much of my experience derived from rental instruments, roughly handled, and it is quite possible that Neuperts are, on the whole, fairly stable. As I said in the book, I believe that this company has the technical know-how and facilities to build really fine instruments, and one hopes that this is what they will eventually do.

A number of makers have written to me that as a result of the book they are trying to build lighter instruments, so the effect on the builders is not all negative. It should be kept in mind that this was not meant for the builder himself, but for the layman and intelligent amateur, who will find much useful information there. Perhaps the book will inspire someone to write a really scientific, careful analysis of the modern harpsichord such as Hubbard has done for the classical instrument. If so, he has my blessings and best wishes.

Sincerely,  
Wallace Zuckermann  
N. Devon, England

*The following letter, written to Mr. Zuckermann by John Challis is printed here by permission of Mr. Challis since we believe it may be of general interest to most readers.*

Dear Wallace:

If you had told me forty years ago when beginning my career that there would be so many harpsichord builders in this country and in the world, or that there would be such an interest in 17th and 18th century music, I would never have believed it. It was then like lighting a candle in the darkness. How things have changed in forty years! Now you you have compiled a book of many

fascinating photos, chosen information from many sources and given your opinion of the ideals, character and workmanship of many harpsichord builders. This is as it must be.

Little did I know forty years ago what kind of a harpsichord I would now be building! Nor do any of these later builders—if they survive—know what they will be building forty years from now! Changing circumstances and new materials have their effect. Each artist must produce in accordance with his talents and ideals—just as each person must live according to his talents and ideals.

There has never been a time in the four centuries of harpsichord making when instruments of such wide variety and consummate skill have been made. There has never been a time when so many harpsichord makers have given their art such complete devotion to their individual ideal. I can understand and admire all of them without ever losing my own ideals, which have not yet and probably never will be completely fulfilled.

Fortunately we live in a country where individualism is allowed and still encouraged. Let us never lose it! Let us never forget that every purchaser of a harpsichord has a right to the kind of instrument he likes and to dislike others. As far as my instruments are concerned, if it is the latter, I am able and willing to have it returned and the money completely refunded, if he later on finds one he likes better. The ability to make instruments where this is possible and the ethics of accomplishing this is my definition of a professional harpsichord builder.

You have given us your own opinion of present day harpsichord builders, just as Frank Hubbard has given us his opinion of old harpsichord builders. In both cases there are points of emphasis and omission according to individual personalities. If I, or someone else, were to write either book, the emphasis would be different and only posterity could decide what opinion it would find desirable to accept.



Some of the owners of instruments of the various makers in your book are infuriated. They have not lived long enough, nor thought deeply enough, to understand the ideals that another maker has devoted his life trying to obtain. They are too ignorant to comprehend that harpsichord building, or any other art, is still greater in scope than any individual.

I hope you, and all the harpsichord builders are still my cherished friends because without these fertile minds, the world and I would be the poorer.

Cordially your friend,  
John Challis, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Haney:

In happy cases, practical performance editions are also fine graphical works, which many people may afford. Very attractive is for instance the Barenreiter bestseller, Jean-Philippe Rameau's complete harpsichord pieces, edited by Erwin R. Jacoby. It was first published in 1958 and has reappeared, almost unaltered, several times.

To celebrate the tercentenary day of Francois Couperin Le Grand at least three editions of his harpsichord music have appeared. They are: (1) The Oiseau-Lyre edition by Thurston Dart. (To the memorial in 1933 Oiseau-Lyre published another, very important, edition by Maurice Cauchie as part of their complete edition. It is limited and expensive). (2) The Heugel & Cie edition by Kenneth Gilbert and (3) the Barenreiter edition.

Like the 1888 Augener edition by Chrysander, they all are scholarly works, achieved by examination of surviving copies of prints authorized by Couperin. Their prices and outer dimensions may vary to some extent.

Here in Scandinavia it is very difficult to compare these publications on the music dealer's desk. Therefore, could the Society publish photographic extracts (some 2 or 3 bars of a suitable piece) in a small size in THE HARPSICHORD?

A remarkable example (mentioned by Mr. Howard Ferguson) is to be found in bar 11 to 38 of Les

Tours de Passe-passe (in Order 22). Another, perhaps a better illustration for our purposes, is to be found almost anywhere in Les Baricades misterieuses (in Order 6). I hope that these editions are available in American libraries. European libraries seem to have severe limitations in their service to patrons caused by rigid restrictions.

I have a question which perhaps can be answered by one of your readers. In her monograph, *Die Kunst des Cembalo-Spiels*, Kassel 1939, Prof. E. Harich-Schneider mentions that she intends to translate de Saint-Lambert's *Les principes du clavecin* (Paris 1702). I do not remember whether she means a German or a German/English translation. However, I have looked in vain for it for some years now. I wonder if any reader of THE HARPSICHORD could help me to find it? Also, could anyone inform me about translations, especially a new French edition of de Saint-Lambert's *Nouveau traite de l'accompagnement du clavecin, de l'orgue et des autres instruments* (Paris 1707)?

If anyone can help, I would appreciate hearing from them.

Leif Essberg  
c/o Fru Elin Dinsdale  
Engelbreuts Gatan 41/41137  
Göteborg, Sweden

Dear Mr. Haney:

I have just returned from England where I spent a holiday listening to and measuring a number of antique instruments. Before I left I met Michael Thomas who is doing some remarkable work—some of which I would like to mention.

Mr. Zuckermann and his chauvinism aside, Mr. Thomas with John Horniblow has built the most authentic reproduction of any harpsichord I have ever seen (of the V & A Hitchcock double), and in another case has made the most resonant instrument I have yet heard—new or old.

He is now building new Shudi-Broadwood instruments. He has the Broadwood papers (I have personally seen John Broadwood's book on acoustics and tension theory) and the

Broadwood instrument collection—much of which he plans to reproduce. Also, I believe he will now be the owner of the remarkable 1709 Barton auctioned at Sotheby's yesterday. Before I left he told me he planned to copy it and that his copy would be more authentic than the original as the latter had much unauthentic work done to it.

I have seen articles by Mr. Thomas on wire diameter and case construction and I think he could be a contributor of interesting articles to THE HARPSICHORD in the future.

Chas. West Wilson  
New York, New York

## CONTEMPORARY MUSIC . . .

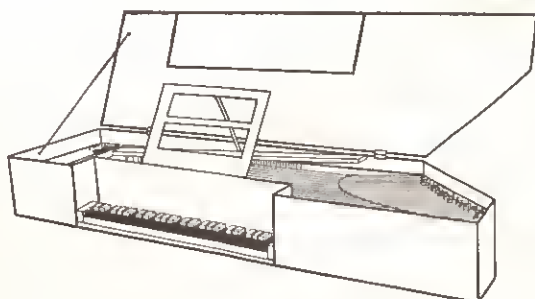
(continued from page 7)

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The Harpsichord — 19

Now Available for Overseas Shipment

# HUBERT BEDARD VIRGINAL



Designed after the Italian Virginal of the 17th and 18th centuries, this instrument has an 8-foot stop and a range of 4 octaves (below middle C to two octaves above) so that the entire "Well-tempered Clavier" of J. S. Bach, the Italian Masters such as Frescobaldi, the English Virginalists and certainly pieces by the French harpsichordists can be played.

On the other hand, it is the ideal instrument for accompanying early music with a soloist or small vocal or instrumental group (with recorder, crumhorn, viols, etc.).

## MEASUREMENTS

Length: 4 ft. 11 inches. Width: 1 ft. 5 inches. Height: 8 inches. Weight: 40 lbs. (Solid wood, particularly stable and light).

## TWO MODELS

(1) KIT: The virginal is sold in separate pieces with all its accessories; detailed instructions (in French, English or German), drawings and a full-sized plan enable an average amateur to assemble the instrument in about ten days.

(2) ASSEMBLED: The virginal is sold completely finished and "voiced", with a finish of linseed oil, varnish, etc., as desired.

## COMPETITIVE PRICE

(1) KIT: \$200. (U. S. dollars)

(2) ASSEMBLED: \$650. (U. S. dollars)

DOCUMENTATION: available on request.

A RECORDING (7 inches, 33 rpm) with works of F. Couperin, Mozart, Gibbons, Witt, etc. played on this virginal is also available. Price of record \$1. (U. S.)



HEUGEL

2 bis, rue Vivienne - Paris 2°

# BAROQUE BAZAAR

Rates: 25c per word. 10 word minimum. Payment must accompany order. Box 4323, Denver, Colorado 80204.

## BUILDERS SUPPLIES:

**HARPSICHORD PARTS:** Keyboards, sound-boards, jacks, hardware, etc. Free catalogue available after June 15th. B & G Instrument Workshop, 8023 Forest Drive, N.E., Seattle, Washington, 98115

## EDUCATION:

**THE NEW WORLD SCHOOL:** an American Montessori Society Affiliate — 471 Summit Avenue, Hackensack, N. J. 07601.

## INSTRUMENTS: FOR SALE

**NEW SHUDI-BROADWOOD HARPSICHORDS.** The Shudi-Broadwood harpsichord is now being made again exactly as it was in the 18th century, and according to private papers of 1750 supplied to Michael Thomas by Stuart Broadwood. There will also be copies of a Barton 1709, Hitchcock (circa 1710) and a Tisseran 1710. Enquiries: The Harpsichord Center, 5 Chiltern Street, London W.1, England.

**HARPSICHORDS, CLAVICHORDS** — Excellent modern German instruments by Sperrhake. Beautiful cabinetry, moderate prices. Robert S. Taylor, 8710 Garfield Street, Bethesda, Maryland 20034.

**HARPSICHORD, EARLY PIANOFORTE** Restoration, Repairs. Agent for various new, used Harpsichords. Bjarne B. Dahl, 1095 Valley Forge Drive, Sunnyvale, Calif. 94087.

**JOHN MORLEY** English Classical Harpsichords. Clavichords. Quick delivery. Safe shipment. Free catalogue. Write 4 Belmont Hill, London, S.E. 13, England.

**HAAS CLAVICHORDS** — single or double strung with 63 note FF to G<sup>3</sup> range. Prices from \$450 to \$600. 6797 Soquel Drive, Aptos, California 95003.

**HARPSICHORDS CUSTOM BUILT.** Antique instruments. John Paul, Parkway, Waldron, Sussex, England.

**NEUPERT HARPSICHORDS, CLAVICHORDS.** Old, est, finest. Free catalogue. MAGNAMUSIC, Sharon, Connecticut 06069.

**SASSMANN HARPSICHORDS.** Traditional Kastenbau Construction. Meticulous Craftsmanship. Grequire Harpsichord Shop, Charlemont, Mass. 01339.

## KITS:

**HARPSICHORD KIT.** Build full size replica of French 18th century harpsichord, 2 x 8', 1 x 4', FF-g<sup>3</sup>. Designed and made by Frank Hubbard. Single-manual \$595; double manual \$795. For brochure write Frank Hubbard, 185A Lyman St., Waltham, Mass. 02154.

**VIRGINAL** — 4½ octaves, patterned after a 17th century Italian instrument, \$1300. Also available in kit form from \$345. William Ross, Harpsichord Maker, Rm. 515-H, 791 Tremont Street, Boston, Mass. 02118.

## NOTICES:

**JOHN CHALLIS**, maker of harpsichords and clavichords has moved to 133 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10003.